

Passed 22d of
Dec. 1792.

An ACT for the relief of the poor of Baltimore-town, in Baltimore county. Lib. JG. No. 1. fol. 630.

Preamble.

WHEREAS a corporation capable of receiving donations, of establishing a productive fund, and of applying the same to the relief of persons in distress, or in want of the means of support and subsistence, would tend to lessen that bulk of human miseries so peculiar to large cities, while at the same time it would open to the charitably disposed a place where they might lodge their donations, in the sure hope of their being distributed so as to answer the greatest possible good; therefore,

Clergymen incorporated, &c.

II. BE IT ENACTED, *by the General Assembly of Maryland*, That one clergyman, minister, preacher, pastor or priest, of each and every sect, order or religious denomination, resident in Baltimore-town, now having, or that hereafter may have, a congregation and church, or house of worship, within the said town, are hereby declared to be one community, corporation and body politic, for ever, by the name of The Corporation for the Relief of the Poor and Distressed of every Sect or Religious Denomination whatever, and by the same name they and their successors shall and may have perpetual succession, and shall and at all times hereafter be persons able and capable in law to purchase, take, have and enjoy, to them and their successors, in fee, or for any less estate or estates, in land, tenements, rents, annuities, stock of the bank of the United States, or any other bank, debt of the United States, or debt of any of the states, pensions and other hereditaments, within this state, by gift, bargain, sale or devise, of any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, capable to make the same; and such lands, tenements, rents, annuities, stock of the bank of the United States, or any other bank, debt of the United States, or debt of any of the states, pensions and other hereditaments, or any less estates, rights or interests, of or in the same, at their pleasure to alien, sell, transfer or lease, in such manner as they may judge most conducive for aiding and furthering the charitable designs of this incorporation, and according to the nature of such estate as they may have in the same; and also, that they and their successors may take and receive any sum or sums of money, and any kind, manner or portion of goods and chattels that may or shall be given, sold or bequeathed, unto them, by any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, capable to make a gift, sale or bequest thereof, and to employ the same in providing poor-house keepers, and others, with fuel and necessaries, especially during the winter and seasons of uncommon distress, or in making such provision for them as may be thought most conducive to alleviate their distress; and further, to employ the same in providing a capital sufficient to produce an yearly interest, revenue or income, for answering the said charitable and other declared purposes of this corporation; provided always, that the said annual revenue or income of the said corporation does not exceed two thousand pounds current money; provided also, that all gifts, legacies or donations, in real estate or other property, not producing an yearly interest, be sold within two years after the same shall be vested in the corporation, and the amount thereof converted into bank stock of the United States bank, or any other bank, or debt of the United States, or any individual state, at the discretion of the said corporation; and provided also, that the corporation shall hold no real estate, except so much as shall be deemed necessary for the asylum hereafter mentioned, for a longer space than two years, the land for said asylum not to exceed ten acres.

Corporation may build an asylum, &c.

III. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the said corporation may, as soon as the state of the funds will admit thereof, build, or direct to be built, an asylum, and therein receive, accommodate and educate, a certain number of poor children, under such government, administration and regulations, as they may think proper, reserving nevertheless a proportion of their funds for the relief of the poor as aforesaid.

Boxes to be fixed up, &c.

IV. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the said corporation may cause to be fixed up, at public places within the said town, boxes for the reception of donations from the charitable citizen.

Clergymen to signify in writing, &c.

V. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That every clergyman, minister or priest, consenting to act as a member of the said corporation, before his admission as such, and as a requisite to admission, shall signify in writing, signed with his name and seal, his intention to undertake the trusts committed to this corporation, and have the said instrument recorded in the records of Baltimore county court, whereupon and thenceforth he shall be held, taken and considered, a member of this corporation; and the same formality and regulation shall be observed, and is hereby required, in cases of vacancy by death, disqualification, or removal from the said town.

VI. BE